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MUCH MARCLE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held
Wednesday, 11th September
7.30pm in Much Marcle Memorial Hall

Present: Cllrs Alison Hope (in the Chair); J Baldwin; S Cotton; E Jefferson; D Griffiths; T Weston

In attendance: Rachel Freestone – Clerk
Barry Durkin – Ward Member
David Beckett – Footpaths Officer
Kirsten Kysow - PCSO

Public: 4

1. Apologies for Absence:

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllrs M Barber-Starkey; F Powell and E Thomas.

2. To receive any declarations of interest or written applications for dispensation:

Cllr Hope declared a pecuniary interest in Agenda item 11c.

3. Open Session:

a. Report from the Ward Councillor:

Ward Member Barry Durkin made comments from his September Ward Report. The Hills Ford Rally is taking place this weekend with the parish of Much Marcle involved. HCC is under pressure to increase house building by 80% to meet the Governments new target. He confirmed that there will be no change to the number of waste collection bins each household has. *A member queried the electric waste collection vehicles.* It was confirmed that these will only be rolled out in Hereford. A number of roads have been surface dressed with many more to be done as part of the program. The Register Office will move to St Owens Street by the end of September. There is a new Victim Advice Line to support those affected by crime no matter how long ago.

It was agreed to bring forward agenda item 8c to allow PCSO Kirsten Kysow time to speak.

8. Highways:

c. To note the proposed speed checks on the A449.

PCSO Kysow mentioned how pleased she is to see the new 40mph on the A449. It was confirmed that a 'Day of Action' will take place on the 25th September to be able to get statistics together on the speeds driven. She informed members that the potential Community Speedwatch is moving forward quickly. The Dymock road and A449 are being assessed on the 12th September to find safe areas for Community Speedwatch Groups to operate from. The Speedwatch Group will need 6 local volunteers to be actively involved for it to be successful. Further information will be provided once safety is ascertained. If successful, all the equipment is provided and would need a volunteer to be responsible for the kit. **It was RESOLVED:** await findings and Highways Group to move the project forwards.

There are no crime concerns, burglaries are likely to spike in the run up to Christmas and she stressed the importance of lighting up homes. Smartwater programs are in place and she can give further information on Smartwater Villages if required. She is also able to arrange Cyber Security presentations if required.

A member commented that HCC are wanting to make the roads outside schools all 20mph. Ward Member Durkin responded that could be 20mph at school times and 30mph at all others. This is something that is being looked at for Much Marcle.

The Chair thanked PCSO Kysow for her time. PCSO Kysow left the meeting at 7.45pm.

Open Session:

b. Public Participation:

A member of the public commented on agenda item 10, planning application at Hellens raising concerns with a potential increase in traffic and noise, the widening of the historic Monks Walk, light pollution and its affect on wildlife. Views and settings impacted.

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A member of the public also commented on the planning application at Hellens with a concern on visibility from the widened entry.

They further commented to complement the parish council for the new gates at Bartons.

Cllr Hope informed the meeting that there will be a public meeting held at Hellens on the 26th September to discuss the planning application and urged all to attend if possible. The PC have been granted an extension of time to respond to this application to allow for public opinion. Ward Member Durkin reminded those present that anyone can make comment on the HCC planning portal.

4. Minutes of the Previous Meeting:

Members considered the minutes from the Parish Council Meeting held on the 17th July 2024. **It was RESOLVED:** to approve the minutes as a true record of the meeting. They were duly signed by the Vice-Chair.

5. Policies and procedures for Much Marcle Parish Council:

- a. Finance Controls and Risk Assessment. **It was RESOLVED:** to adopt the amendments shown in red and approve the policy for 2024-25.
- b. Risk Schedule. **It was RESOLVED:** to approve the amendments to the risk schedule and to review them three times a year to tie in with meeting dates. July, November and March.

6. Much Marcle Memorial Hall:

- a. To receive a report from the parish council representative:
Cllr Baldwin reported that the Memorial Hall Committee had been successful with a Lottery Community Award and would receive just under £20,000 to enable them to replace all the windows and install insulation. All agreed that this was great news.

7. To receive an update on the Community Shop:

In their absence Cllr Hope read out a brief report that they had provided. Please see the attached.

8. Highways:

- a. To consider any matters arising from the Highways Working Group:
In his absence there was none.
- b. To consider the speed of vehicles on the Dymcok Road, B4024:
Please see Agenda item 8c.
- D. To consider Finger Post signs to direct traffic to the school, Memorial Hall and Church:
A quote had been obtained by the Clerk for a Fingerpost sign. **It was RESOLVED:** the Highways Group to research further with regards to what would be needed on the sign and potential planning application requirements.

9. Footpaths:

- a. To receive a report on the Footpath Regeneration Project:
Footpaths Officer David Beckett addressed members. There have been a number of issues and delays due to communication between the different bodies and obstacles being put in the way.
MM23 – HCC have approved the replacement bridge and will fund in total, the bridge will be all wood and follow the legal line of the footpath.
MM16 – HCC have informed them that the bridge needs to be 8m rather than the current 7m. HCC have verbally confirmed that they will pay for the bridge with the abutments up to a maximum cost of £8000 to be paid for by the PC from the Lottery funding. HCC will cover any difference if exceeds this. The abutments will be installed by approved contractors.
Awaiting the above to be put into writing. A letter to be sent via the Clerk to Ward Member Barry Durkin to comment on the frustrations of the projects progress.
David Beckett requested the purchase of a battery operated hedge trimmer at £139.99 as the petrol hedge trimmer they use is heavy. **It was RESOLVED:** to purchase the hedge trimmer at a cost of £139.99 gross.
With regards to stiles, members were informed that stiles no. 3 and 4 are completed with replacement self closing gates installed. The last stile will be replaced at the end of September creating an accessible walking route.

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He commented that a lot of hours had been given to the footpaths. Cllr Hope, on behalf of the PC, thanked the Footpaths team.

- b. Members noted the purchase of a First Aid Kit. David Beckett asked about access to Farms for first aid support. **It was RESOLVED:** that first aid training would be beneficial, the Clerk to research a basic first aid course.
- c. To receive a report on any other Footpath matters arising. There were none.

10. Planning:

- a. To comment on Planning Applications for Determination by Herefordshire Council:
 - 241873 Hellens, Monks Walk, Much Marcle. Proposed erection of a gallery and recital building with associated works.
Cllr Hope reiterated that the public meeting is being held on the 26th September in the Barn at Hellens. No time given as of yet. An Extra Meeting will be necessary to discuss this application following the public meeting. **It was RESOLVED:** to arrange the Extra Meeting for Monday 7th October, 7.30pm. Venue to be confirmed. The Planning Group to meet prior to this meeting.
 - 242163 Hill Cottage, Much Marcle. Construction of timber frame barn for agricultural and equestrian mixed use.
Cllr Weston confirmed that this application has not yet been considered by the Planning Group due to the timings of receipt. **It was RESOLVED:** the planning working group to consider the application and report their response to the Clerk.
- b. Members noted the Planning Responses Submitted between Meetings under Devolved Powers:
 - 241895 Hale End, Much Marcle. Refurbishment of existing bungalow. SUPPORT
- c. Members noted the planning decisions made by Herefordshire Council:
 - 233688 Land at Upper House, 2 shepherds huts. APPROVED with conditions
 - 241187 Hellens Lodge, proposed extension. APPROVED with conditions
 - 240227 Phillips House, Sycamore tree CAN PROCEED.

8.25pm Ward Member Barry Durkin left the meeting.

11. Assets:

- a. Members noted the installation of the gates and fence at Bartons. Cllr Cotton informed members that the area under the old play matting had been grass seeded. Cllr Cotton was thanked for all his work at Bartons.
- b. To note the condition of the bus shelter in Much Marcle: In the absence of Cllr Thomas this item was deferred to the next meeting.
- c. To note the latest tree inspection and subsequent works carried out. Cllr Hope informed the meeting that the minor work to remove dead wood at Bartons had not yet been approved. Cllr Hope abstained from further comment or vote. **It was RESOLVED:** to approve the work required. This has been kindly offered as a donation, Cllr Hope was thanked.
- d. Members considered the purchase of a replacement noticeboard following the removal of the old metal noticeboard by the Bartons fence. **It was RESOLVED:** to purchase a metal, weatherproof board of a sympathetic colour to be fitted into the wooden shelter at the entrance. The Finance Working Group were given authority to purchase up to a value of £700. The Clerk to remove the old noticeboard from the asset register.
- e. Members noted the purchase of a replacement laptop for the Clerk. The Finance Working Group had considered three laptops from HP and opted for the most suitable and cost efficient. **It was RESOLVED:** to ratify the purchase of the laptop in between meetings.
- f. Members noted the purchase of a first aid kit for the Footpath Officers. **It was RESOLVED:** to add the kit to the asset register.
- g. Cllr Baldwin informed members that the defibrillator is in good working order.

12. Environment and Community:

- a. To note the Parishioners Wish List from the Annual Parish Meeting. **It was RESOLVED:** to defer to the next meeting for the finance and environment working groups to consider the list.

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13. Finance

- a. Members noted the Bank Reconciliation and Bank Balances for July and August 2024. Cllr Baldwin as a non-bank signatory duly checked and signed the bank statements, invoices and bank reconciliation as a true record.

A member commented that a long term plan would be beneficial for the Twinning Association Grant, to find out whether it can be used for another community project if not been successful with the French link after a stated period of time. **It was RESOLVED:** the Clerk to contact both the school and the Twinning Association contact. The Finance Working Group to consider and bring to the next meeting.

- b. Members noted the amendment to the Asset Register to include the gates and fence at Bartons.
 c. Members noted the quote and the purchase of insurance from Hiscox Insurance for £468.91 as part of a LTA, bought through Gallagher Insurance.
 d. Members noted that the insurance brokers had been contacted to inform them of the new gates at Bartons with no change to the premium.
 e. Members noted the amendment to Unity Bank Charging Structure from quarterly to monthly.
 f. Members noted the following paper virements from the Cashbook Reserves to Budget to bring the Cashbook in line with the Reserves policy:

- Website - £123.63 reserve added to 2024-25 budget. New budget figure £523.63
- Training - £386.23 reserve added to 2024 – 25 budget. New budget figure £506.23
- Grants - £158.95 reserve added to 2024-25 budget. New budget figure £658.95
- Footpaths - £678 reserve added to 2024-25 budget. New budget figure £978.00
- **It was RESOLVED:** to transfer £678 from the footpaths budget to the Asset reserve.

- g. **It was RESOLVED:** to approve the following invoices for payment:

- Clerk’s Expenses printer cartridge/Microsoft Licence/Laptop and first aid £542.23net/650.68gr
- Councillor Expenses refreshments training evening £50.00
- MMMH hire July £15.00

Cllr Cotton requested that his expenses for the grass seed be considered. **It was RESOLVED:** to approve the additional invoice for payment:

- Cllr Expenses Bartons £37.50

- h. **It was RESOLVED:** To ratify the following regular payments made between meetings:

- Clerk Salary July/August As per contract

- i. **It was RESOLVED:** To ratify the following payments made between meetings:

- Gallagher Insurance £468.91
- Say It With Wood £4935.74net/£5922.88

- j. Members noted that no income had been received.

- k. Members noted the following virements made between Unity Accounts:

- 02.07.2024 £1000 Instant Access Savings to Current
- 24.08.2024 £6000 Instant Access Savings to Current.

14. Training

- a. To note any training that has been undertaken and consider any training needs. Cllr Baldwin confirmed that he would be attending the HCC Parish Council Summit alongside Cllr Barber-Starkey on the 8th October. No other training needs were identified.

15. Correspondence:

Members noted the Hills Ford Stages correspondence.

16. To consider items for the next meeting:

To include the Budget, Twinning Association, Community Speedwatch Group, Wish list, first aid course and condition of the bus shelter.

17. **Next Meeting:** It was Noted that there will be a Planning Extra Meeting on the 7th October at 7.30pm and that the next meeting of Much Marcle Parish Council will be held at 7.30pm on Wednesday 13th November, both in Much Marcle Memorial Hall.

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Signed Date

Chair

The meeting closed at 8.44pm

Community Shop Report

A Big Thankyou To our Amazing Fundraisers

Our fundraisers have continued to work really hard, the whole time we have been waiting for our planning decision. (We are still waiting.)

The best example of their dedication to getting our shop built came during the first weekend in September this year when they organised and staffed a book stall at the Model Air Show and stuck it out for most of the two days, in spite of the worst weather we've had in years. A big thank you as well to the organisers of the Model Air Show who let us have a stall for the second year running.

At Ledbury Carnival and at the Steam Rally, our dedicated volunteers informed lots of people about the shop and met some lovely community shop shareholders who said they won't give up on the idea of a shop as long as we keep going. The volunteers also raised just under £1000.

Hopes are high for the 200 Club, where you have a chance to win money every month whilst helping to raise more money for the shop. And if you need a sweet treat, there may still be time to buy tickets for a full Afternoon Tea on 21st September in the Memorial Hall in Much Marcle.

We've already told you about the success of larger fund-raising events like the Open Gardens in May. But smaller initiatives have helped as well. Sweet peas from Chandos Farm were on sale outside Mainwerings. People heading up to St Bartholomew's bought plants and jam from outside Swan Cottage. And thanks to Hellens Produce Market, volunteers are able to sell plants and jam and apple juice every month as well as raising awareness of the shop.

Altogether, our wonderful fundraisers have raised more than £20000 in addition to the current shareholders total, (from 260 shareholders) of £93000.

Once we had paid for the printing of the Share Offer brochure, our biggest expenses have all been associated with gaining planning permission for the shop. All the reports which were required by the planners have so far cost £7500, a lot less than predicted, due to the generosity of the landowner and because we had other volunteers who prepared some of the reports.

Thank you to all the people who have volunteered their time and their services ever since November 2019, when the Parish Council voted to "Support, where possible, the Community Shop Project". And thank you to the Parish Council for your continuing support.